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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Memorandum of Conversation

DATE: April 29, 1964

SUBJECT: Transition Period of US Aid to Libya and Libyan Ambassador's Suggestion for a US Technical Survey Group to Visit Libya

PARTICIPANTS: Henry J. Tasca, Deputy Assistant Secretary for African Affairs
David D. Newsom, Director, Northern African Affairs
Grant V. McClanahan, OIC Libyan Affairs
Ambassador Fathi Abidia, Libyan Ambassador

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Libyan Ambassador Fathi Abidia during a call on the African Bureau of the Department on April 29 was informed by Mr. Tasca of the demarche which had been made by Ambassador Lightner to Prime Minister Muntasir in Baida on March 6 concerning the future of the US Aid Program in Libya. Under an instruction from the Department the Libyan Prime Minister had been informed that in the light of Libya's excellent financial condition and ready access to available sources of investment capital we proposed to make a transition during the next year or two to a new phase in which the US would be prepared to facilitate Libyan Government access to technical advice and services from US industrial firms, universities, foundations and US Government agencies.

Mr. Tasca emphasized that this transition did not mean any lessening of the US Government's interest in Libya. The good fortune of Libya in having such an improved and expanding economic situation was something we welcomed and on which we naturally felt that our Libyan friends should be congratulated.

Ambassador Abidia acknowledged that Libya did not seem to have a future need for financial assistance. He said that in his view what Libya would need was technical assistance and good advice. It would be helpful if a team of US experts went to Libya and in collaboration with Libyan officials made a survey of the types of technical assistance Libya required. This would then help the Libyans to manage their development more effectively and would assist them to carry out their economic development plan. Ambassador Abidia said he would report to his Government the information he had received from the Department. Mr. Tasca told the Ambassador that we would study his suggestion and probably ask our people in Libya about it.

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